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## Govt bears 90 per cent of study cost in IPTA

PETALING JAYA: About 90 per cent of the study cost in public institutions of higher learning (IPTA) is actually borne by the government, with the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) loan can be regarded as merely to cover the students' living expenses.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Khaled Nordin said the PTPTN loan would be used to cover only about 10 per cent of the whole study cost in IPTA.

"Unlike in other countries, the (Malaysian) government gives loan to graduates to cover their cost of living expenses," he told reporters after launching the Industry Centre of Excellence (ICoE) for wholesale and retail here yesterday.

He said this in response to the abolishment of the one per cent ujah PTPTN loan by Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) director of strategy, Mohd Rafizi Ramli, during a debate with Umno Youth leader Khairy Jamaluddin on "Abolishment of PTPTN & Direction of Higher Education" which was broadcast live by Astro Awani and Bernama Radio24 last Tuesday.

"One per cent is only a small amount for the graduates to pay for the cost of managing the loan," said Mohd Khaled, adding that he did not see the need to abolish the ujah.

The ICoE programme, a collaboration between ICoE Mydin Mohamed Holdings and several institutions of higher learning, like Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and

Perak Universiti Teknologi Mara (UITM) Perak, focuses on development of human capital, involving school leavers, certificate, diploma and degree holders, through industrial training and part-time jobs.

Earlier in his speech, Khaled said the main purpose of setting up the ICoE was to provide a venue for industry players and universities to meet to exchange views on matters pertaining to human resource planning, placement of under-graduates for industrial training, opportunities for part-time jobs and to jointly resolve problems.

"Students will not only be able to earn an income, but also obtain valuable experience in business," he added. - Bernama